

Washington, D.C. - The House of Representatives unanimously passed an amendment offered by U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Illinois) and U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen (D-Washington) calling for the integration of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) into the intelligence community. The [Kirk/Larsen Amendment](#) is part of H.R. 10, the 9/11 Implementation Recommendations Act, currently pending in the House of Representatives. The amendment directs the President to report to the Judiciary and Intelligence Committees on the practicality of integrating the DEA into the intelligence community.

"The lessons of Columbia reveal that drugs and terrorism are not strangers," said Congressman Kirk. "In Afghanistan today, Osama bin Laden is funding his terrorist operations using profits from heroin sales. DEA agents are developing a clear picture of bin Laden's finances in some cases, clearer than anything produced by official intelligence channels. It is imperative that the Central Intelligence Agency and Drug Enforcement Administration attack heroin networks in the mountain regions where bin Laden lives using the best intelligence available."

Congressman Kirk traveled to Afghanistan in February of this year. During his trip, Kirk learned Afghan drug kingpin, Haji Bashir Noorzai, delivered 2,000 kilograms of heroin every eight weeks to Al Qaeda operatives. At the market price in Pakistan, this one supply chain yields Osama bin Laden \$28 million a year.

With resurgent drug trade, we can expect newfound strengths with al Qaeda. To date, the U.S. response has been weak. Until September 11th, U.S. administrations regarded the Afghan heroin problem as Europe's concern because heroin found on American streets came from Colombia. While true, this analysis missed the key connection: drug profits fund terrorists. As a result of Congressman Kirk's fact finding mission, the House of Representatives passed legislation offering rewards for the arrest of drug kingpins who finance terror which awaits the President's signature.

"As the White House considers a more aggressive policy to pursue and arrest heroin cartel kingpins, there is not a moment to lose," said Congressman Kirk. "This effort needs good intelligence that will be enhanced if the White House brings the DEA into our intelligence community. By bringing DEA into our intelligence community, we can attack the last major source of income for Osama bin Laden."